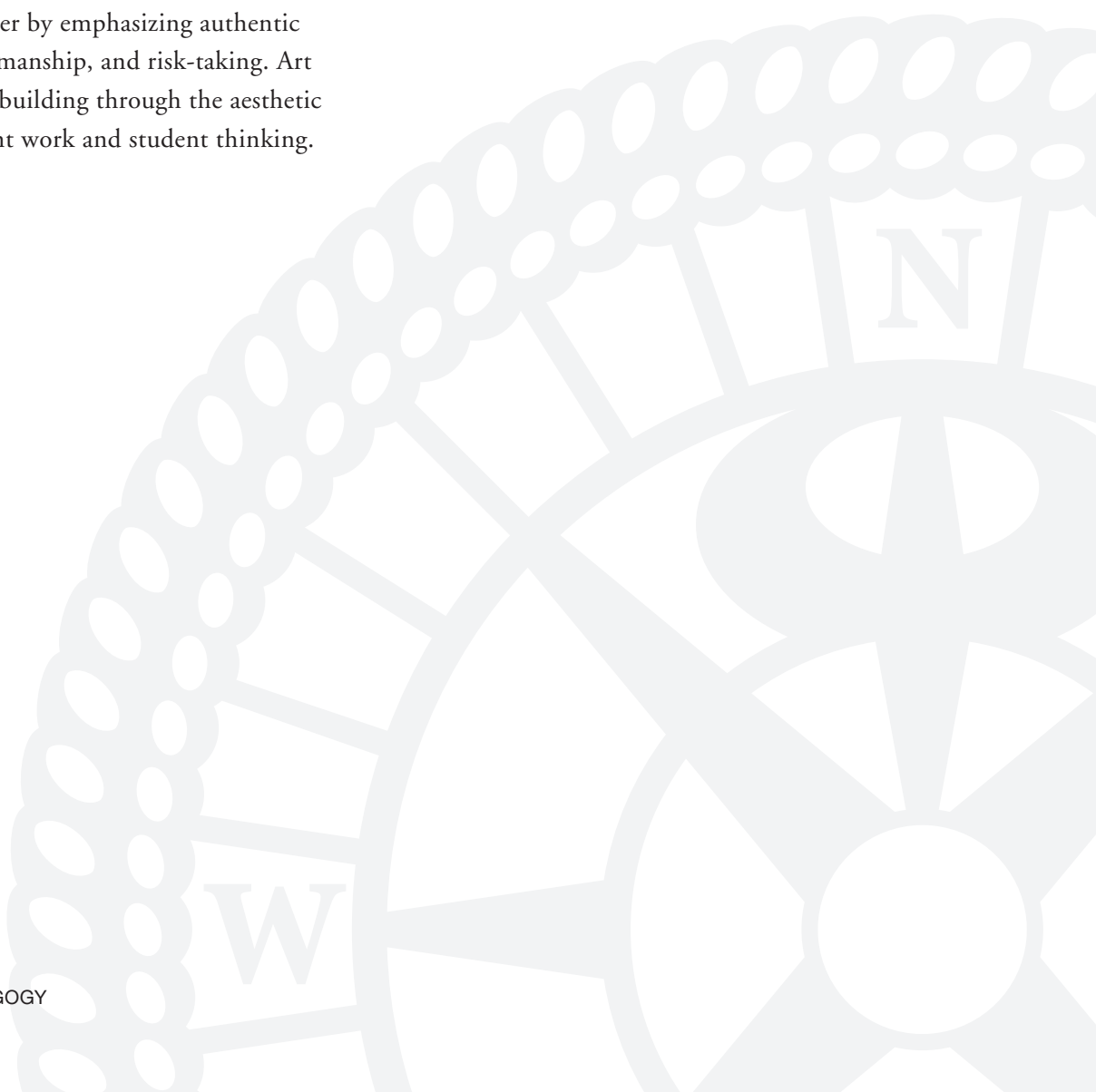


## Active Pedagogy: Learning In and Through the Arts

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### Overview

In Expeditionary Learning schools, art is an important vehicle for learning and for representing learning through products. In learning expeditions, students have the opportunity to create, perform, and respond to a variety of art forms, and to connect the arts to content. The visual and performing arts are taught using the same effective instructional practices that are used in other disciplines and every effort is made to give all students access to exhibitions and performances. The arts build school culture and student character by emphasizing authentic performance, craftsmanship, and risk-taking. Art enlivens the school building through the aesthetic exhibition of student work and student thinking.



## BENCHMARK 6:

### LEARNING IN AND THROUGH THE ARTS

#### A. Structures for Teaching the Arts

1. The arts and/or history of the arts are sometimes the focus of inquiry for an expedition (e.g., Arts during the Harlem Renaissance) where each in-depth investigation examines a different artistic genre (e.g., jazz, painting, and poetry).
2. The arts and history of the arts are sometimes the subject of in-depth investigations in a social studies expedition.
3. Sometimes art is taught through integrated art projects connected to interdisciplinary learning expeditions.
4. Independent projects in an arts discipline or in the arts are sometimes used to teach the skills and techniques of a particular art form.

#### B. Teaching Through the Arts

1. Teachers design projects and products that require students to learn the techniques of an artistic medium and to represent their understanding of expedition content.
2. Visual arts, movement, and drama are used to make sense of concepts in various disciplines.
3. Teachers ask students to respond to fieldwork, exhibitions, performances, and literature using various art forms.
4. Teachers help students generalize what they learn from analyzing and critiquing art to other disciplines (e.g., making connections between drawing and writing).

#### C. Teaching the Arts

1. In-depth observation skills are taught.
2. Students are taught a common language for analyzing, critiquing, and responding to the art form they are studying.
3. Critique and revision refine and improve artistic skills and techniques.

4. Students are taught to reason and solve problems in artistic production.
5. Students learn the symbol system for the particular art form they are studying (e.g., notation in music).

#### D. Documenting Student Learning and Creating an Aesthetic Environment

1. The school creates displays of student work that demonstrate student thinking and articulate student learning in classrooms and hallways.
2. These displays demonstrate the values of presentation and craftsmanship.

#### E. Culture, Equity, Diversity, and Character

1. Teachers use the arts to reach diverse learning styles and to enable students to discover talents and aptitudes.
2. Students exhibit craftsmanship in art projects, products, and performances.
3. Teachers use performances to build classroom culture, community, and teamwork.
4. The school provides all students with access to live art performances, artists, and exhibitions.
5. All students are exposed to the major arts and each student has opportunities to work in a variety of media.
6. The arts are used to help teach persistence and self-discipline.
7. The arts help students learn about and appreciate other cultures and diverse artistic styles.
8. Art is intentionally used to help students take multiple perspectives.